

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 274314

FOR DEP ASST SEC DAY

THE FOLLOWING REPEAT CAIRO 15249 SENT ACTION SECSTATE 06 NOV 76

QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 15249

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, US, EG

SUBJ: EGYPTIAN REACTION TO US PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION RESULTS

1. MEDIA COVERAGE OF CARTER VICTORY IN US PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION WAS MODERATE TO HEAVY,BUT DECIDEDLY MORE NEUTRAL AND NON-COMMITAL THAN PRIVATE OPINIONS EXPRESSED BY EGYPTIANS. THESE HAVE RANGED ACROSS WIDE SPECTRUM. ON ONE EXTREME ARE COMMENTS BY AN EMBOFF'S MAID AND SOME YOUNG STUDENTS WHO CONCLUDED THAT ALL AMERICAN OFFICIALS WILL NOW SOON BE LEAVING EGYPT AND AID PROGRAM WILL CEASE. ON OTHER EXTREME,WAS UNDERSECRETARY IN MINISTRY OF CULTURE, WHO HAD RECENTLY VIEWED PRESIDENT-ELECT CARTER ON TELEVISION IN EUROPE. EXPRESSING ADMIRATION FOR THE PRESIDENT-ELECT'S INTELLIGENCE AND SERIOUSNESS, HE CONSIDERS ELECTION OUTCOME GOOD FOR EGYPT.

2. ON OFFICIAL LEVEL, GOE IS ADOPTING CORRECT STANCE. ELECTION RESULTS DEMONSTRATED WILL OF THE AMERICAN
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PEOPLE AND GOE ACCEPTS THEM AS SUCH. PRESIDENT

SADAT'S CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT-ELECT
CARTER WAS GIVEN WIDE PUBLICITY IN LOCAL PRESS
AND SIGNALS ATTITUDE GOE WISHES PRESS TO TAKE.
SENIOR GOE OFFICIALS ARE CONVINCED THAT
IMPERATIVES OF ME SITUATION WILL ALSO REQUIRE
NEW ADMINISTRATION TO PROCEED WITH PEACE PROCESS,
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.-6 ?3 \$3)-63\$ *94 9.3 .9,5# 2#8)3 ,32
-\$,8 54-589,)3-\$34 -43 ACQUAINTING THEMSELVES
WITH PROBLEM.

3. BULK OF EGYPTIAN OFFICIALS, MILITARY OFFICERS,
AND PRIVATE CITIZENS WITH WHOM WE HAVE SPOKEN,
VOICE DICHOTOMOUS VIEWS. ON ONE HAND, THEY HAVE
BEEN DEEPLY IMPRESSED WITH US DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM AT
WORK, AS SHOWN BY ELECTIONS. ON OTHER, THEY
PRIVATELY EXPRESS SOME APPREHENSION AND UNCERTAINTY.
REASONS APPEAR TO BE: (A) PRESIDENT FORD AND
SECRETARY KISSINGER ARE KNOWN QUANTITIES AND ADMIRED
FOR WHAT EGYPTIANS SEE AS MOST EVEN-HANDED US POLICY
IN ME IN RECENT TIMES; (B) IN CONTRAST, PRESIDENT-
ELECT IS STILL UNKNOWN QUANTITY, AND SOME OF HIS
CAMPAIGN STATEMENTS WERE PERCEIVED AS ONE-SIDED;
AND (C) SINCE NEW ADMINISTRATION WILL ACQUAINT
ITSELF WITH ME SITUATION, YEARNED-FOR RESUMPTION
OF PEACE PROCESS MAY BE DELAYED ANYWHERE FROM
THREE TO SIX MONTHS OR MORE AFTER NEW
ADMINISTRATION TAKES OFFICE.

4. EGYPTIANS ARE BY NATURE OPTIMISTIC,
AND ANXIOUS TO LOOK ON BRIGHT SIDE. THEY NOW
ARE EMPHASIZING IN PRIVATE CONVERSATIONS THAT
EGYPT'S RELATIONS WITH THE US ARE NOT BASED
ON PERSONALITIES BUT THE NATIONAL INTERESTS OF
BOTH COUNTRIES. THEY PROFESS TO BELIEVE THAT
ANY WELL-INTENTIONED AMERICAN LEADER, WILL CONCLUDE
THAT US INTERESTS REQUIRE AN EVEN-HANDED
POLICY BETWEEN ARABS AND ISRAELIS. PERHAPS FOR THIS
REASON, MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTION IS WHO WILL
BE NEXT SECRETARY OF STATE.
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5. INTERESTING COMMENT WE HAVE HEARD FROM OFFICIALS
IN FONMIN'S CABINET IS THAT GOE MAY WISH TO RELY
ON ITS TRADITIONAL FRIENDS IN WESTERN EUROPE, SUCH AS
BRITISH AND FRENCH, TO PREPARE GROUND FOR EGYPTIAN
APPROACHE TO NEW ADMINISTRATION. THIS WOULD BE IN
THE BEST ME TRADITION OF SEEKING INTERMEDIARY TO HANDLE
DIFFICULT SITUATIONS OR THOSE IN WHICH ONE PARTY

FEELS UNCOMFORTABLE.

6. CAIRO PRESS NOV. 6 GAVE PROMINENT COVERAGE TO PRESIDENT-ELECT'S PRESS CONFERENCE AND QUOTED HIM AS SAYING HE HOPED COMPREHENSIVE SOLUTION WILL BE REACHED DURING HIS TENURE. ACCORDING TO GUMHURIYYA, HE "STOPPED USING TONE OF VIOLENCE ABOUT ME USED DURING ELECTION CAMPAIGN." AKHBAR AL-YAWM REPORTS THAT HIGH-RANKING EGYPTIAN PERSONALITY WILL FLY TO US IF CONTACTS EGYPT WILL CARRY OUT WITH PRESIDENT-ELCT AFTER HE ASSUMES POWER PROVE SUCCESSFUL. ALL PAPERS ALSO REPORT THAT ARAB AMBASSADORS IN WASHINGTON HAVE DECIDED TO BEGIN CONTACTING AIDES OF PRESIDENT-ELECT AS SOON AS THEY ARE APPOINTED TO DISCUSS ME. AMBASSADORS ALSO REPORTEDLY EXPRESSED FEAR THAT NEW ADMINISTRATION MIGHT CAUSE DELAY IN FURTHER PROGRESS TOWARD ME SOLUTION. THEY BELIEVE ARABS SHOULD CARRY OUT COLLECTIVE AND URGENT CONTACTS TO ENSURE THAT ME CRISIS IS FOREMOST AMONG NEW ADMINISTRATION'S PRIORITIES AND THAT 1977 BE YEAR OF "TOTAL SOLUTION." ARAB CIRCLES QUOTED AS FEARING THAT ISRAEL MIGHT TRY TO DELAY MOVING TOWARD SOLUTION BECAUSE OF ISRAELI ELECTIONS NEXT OCTOBER, BUT ISRAEL SHOULD NOT BE GIVEN SUCH OPPORTUNITY. CARTER SOURCES QUOTED AS SAYING TRADITION REQUIRES THAT PRESIDENT-ELECT NOT MEET WITH AMBASSADORS OR FOREIGN GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS UNTIL JANUARY 20. HOWEVER, CONTACTS COULD BE MADE THROUGH AIDES.

7. CHIEF EDITOR OF LEADING CAIRO DAILY AHRAH WROTE NOV. 5 THAT CARTER CAMPAIGN STATEMENTS WERE MADE "WITH AN EYE TO THE JEWISH VOTE WHICH NORMALLY
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SWAYS THE OUTCOME OF US PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS." NEVERTHELESS, ARABS HAVE ACQUIRED GREAT INFLUENCE AND STANDING IN AMERICA AND ELSEWHERE AND CAN ENSURE AMERICAN POLICTY DOES NOT IGNORE ARAB ASPIRATIONS OR SWITCH POLICY BACK TO FULL SUPPORT FOR ISRAEL. IN SAME EDITIORIAL, FAHMY-GROMYKO MEETING IN SOFIA DESCRIBED AS TAKING PLACE AT PARTICULARLY SIGNIFICANT TIME FOR GOE-USSR RELATIONS AND BECAUSE NEW US PRESIDENT HAS DIFFERENT POLITICAL CONCEPT OF WORLD. US POLICY TOWARD USSR WAS AMONG ISSUES CARTER CRITICIZED DURING CAMPAIGN, EDITOR SAID, AND "SOFIA MEETING THEREFORE IMPORTANT TO BOTH CARIO AND MOSCOW." EILTS

UNQUOTE KISSINGER

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